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TAGS: [PHUM](#) [ELAB](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [SOCI](#) [KDEM](#) [KCRM](#) [KU](#)
SUBJECT: INTERIOR AND PLANNING MINISTERS CONFIRM GOK
COMMITMENT TO COMBAT TIP; AWARENESS CAMPAIGN KEY TO PROGRESS

REF: STATE 206043 (NOTAL)

11. (SBU) Summary: During separate meetings on November 12, the Ambassador pressed Interior Minister Shaykh Nawaf Al-Sabah and Planning Minister Dr. Masouma Al-Mubarak to step up GOK efforts to combat human trafficking and improve the working conditions of Kuwait's large expatriate work force. He noted progress to date, but said that Kuwait should be a regional leader in protecting workers' rights and urged the prompt establishment of shelters for domestic workers as a step forward. Both ministers said that combating TIP was a GOK priority and that the Government was committed to bettering working conditions. Both also said that a public information campaign on TIP was key to progress and said they looked forward to working with the U.S. on increasing public awareness to human trafficking. End Summary.

12. (SBU) During a November 12 meeting with First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior (MOI), Shaykh Nawaf Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the Ambassador restated the necessity of the prompt adoption of measures to combat Trafficking in Persons (TIP). He noted the hard work and dedication of the intergovernmental committee led by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor (MOSAL), but said Kuwait should set the regional standards for the treatment and protection of expatriate workers. He cited the establishment of shelters for domestic workers as a progressive step that could serve a large portion of Kuwait's work force as a resource and mediation center, and refuge when necessary. He restated the U.S. interest in working with Kuwait on TIP issues and noted the recently approved Project FALCon as an area for cooperation (reftel). (NOTE: Ambassador held a widely-covered press roundtable on TIP issues on November 9.)

13. (U) Shaykh Nawaf responded that MOI was working closely with MOSAL to develop better procedures to regulate the hiring of foreign workers and their working conditions. Combating TIP was a GOK priority and the Government also strove to strengthen and better publicize existing resources such as the Domestic Labor Department to assist laborers.

14. (SBU) The Ambassador raised the same concerns in a separate November 12 meeting with Dr. Masouma Saleh Al-Mubarak, Minister of Planning and State Minister for Administrative Development Affairs. Dr. Masouma said TIP issues were regularly discussed in meetings of the Council of Ministers and reported that MOSAL Minister Faisal Mohammed Al-Hajji was sincere in his efforts to improve working conditions. She commented that it was easy to identify solutions, but their implementation could be difficult and complicated. Nonetheless, that was not an excuse for inaction. She argued that educating workers and their employers was imperative and commented that many employment contracts were written in English and Arabic, but not the language of the employee. As a result, domestics and

low-level laborers were ignorant of their rights. She also said that source countries for Kuwait's expatriate laborers needed to be targeted, alleging that travel documents were often falsified so that minors could be employed. She welcomed Project FALCon and pledged the cooperation of her ministry as needed.

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